

□ (Warren, Ohio) – Today, Congressman Tim Ryan (OH-17) commended the increasing support of pro-life individuals and groups in championing comprehensive health care reform for all Americans. On Wednesday March 17, the heads of major Catholic women’s religious orders (representing 59,000 women religious) encouraged all members of Congress to “cast a life-affirming ‘yes’ vote” on [H.R. 3590](#). The announcement by the Catholic nuns comes on the heels of similar pleas for the passage of health reform by the U.S. Catholic Health Association (CHA) and a coalition of 25 pro-life religious individuals and groups. Congressman Ryan – a practicing Catholic, pro-life Democrat, and supporter of health reform – states:

“When Congress passes comprehensive health care reform this week, we will make a tangible, positive difference in the lives of millions of Americans. Families with young children need not be fearful of a late-night fever. Working men and women need not be fearful of ‘pre-existing conditions’. Seniors need not be fearful of falling into a ‘donut hole’. Small business owners need not be fearful of bankruptcy due to the overwhelming cost of health insurance. The insurance industry, on the other hand, should indeed be fearful. Fearful of accountability. Fearful that rate increases will be repealed. Fearful of losing profits from skyrocketing premiums. We have a moral obligation to protect, empower, and improve the lives of our citizens. We have no obligation to support the skyrocketing profits of the insurance industry. This bill puts the American people over corporate profits, and I am proud to support it.”

#

CATHOLIC WOMEN RELIGIOUS SUPPORT LETTER

March 17, 2010

Re: Pass healthcare reform by passing the Senate bill

Dear Members of Congress:

We write to urge you to cast a life-affirming “yes” vote when the Senate health care bill (H.R. 3590) comes to the floor of the House for a vote as early as this week. We join the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), which represents 1,200 Catholic sponsors, systems, facilities and related organizations, in saying: **the time is now for health reform AND the Senate bill is a good way forward** .

As the heads of major Catholic women’s religious order in the United States, we represent 59,000 Catholic Sisters in the United States who respond to needs of people in many ways. Among our other ministries we are responsible for running many of our nation’s hospital systems as well as free clinics throughout the country.

We have witnessed firsthand the impact of our national health care crisis, particularly its impact on women, children and people who are poor. We see the toll on families who have delayed seeking care due to a lack of health insurance coverage or lack of funds with which to pay high deductibles and co-pays. We have counseled and prayed with men, women and children who have been denied health care coverage by insurance companies. We have witnessed early and

avoidable deaths because of delayed medical treatment.

The health care bill that has been passed by the Senate and that will be voted on by the House will expand coverage to over 30 million uninsured Americans. While it is an imperfect measure, it is a crucial next step in realizing health care for all. It will invest in preventative care. It will bar insurers from denying coverage based on pre-existing conditions. It will make crucial investments in community health centers that largely serve poor women and children. And despite false claims to the contrary, the Senate bill will not provide taxpayer funding for elective abortions. It will uphold longstanding conscience protections and it will make historic new investments – \$250 million – in support of pregnant women. This is the REAL pro-life stance, and we as Catholics are all for it.

Congress must act. We are asking every member of our community to contact their congressional representatives this week. In this Lenten time, we have launched nationwide prayer vigils for health care reform. We are praying for those who currently lack health care. We are praying for the nearly 45,000 who will lose their lives this year if Congress fails to act. We are also praying for you and your fellow Members of Congress as you complete your work in the coming days. For us, this health care reform is a faith mandate for life and dignity of all of our people.

We urge you to vote “yes” for life by **voting yes for health care reform in H.R. 3590.**

Sincerely,

Signatures for 3-16-10 healthcare leadership letter

Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA

LCWR President

Leadership Conference of Women Religious

Leadership Team

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas

Leadership Team

Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Joan Chittister, OSB

Co-Chair Global Peace Initiative of Women

Erie, PA

Sr. Mary Persico, IHM

President

Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary,

Scranton, PA

Sr. Susan Hadzima, IHM

Councilor for Missioning and Community Life

Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary,

Scranton, PA

Mary Pelligrino, Marguerite Coyne, Rosanne Oberleitner, Carolyn Bodenshatz

Leadership team

Sisters of St. Joseph

Baden, PA

Sr. Helen McDonald, SHCJ

Province Leader

Society of the Holy Child Jesus

Philadelphia, PA

Vivien Linkhauer, SC

Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill, United States Province

Greensburg, PA

Ruth Goodwin, OSF

Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia

Sister Barbara Hagedorn, SC

Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati

Mt. St. Joseph, Ohio

Marilyn Kerber, SNDdeN

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur

Canonical Representative, Ohio Province

Sisters of St. Francis

Tiffin, Ohio

Leadership Team

Sisters of the Precious Blood

Dayton, OH

Nancy Conway CSJ

Congregation Leadership Team

The Congregation of St. Joseph

Joan Saalfeld, SNJM, Provincial

Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary

U.S.-Ontario Province

Jo'Ann De Quattro, SNJM

Sisters of the Holy Names

U.S.-Ontario Province Leadership Team

Josephine Gaugier, OP

Adrian Dominican Sisters

Holy Rosary Mission Chapter Prioress

Adrian, MI

Kathleen Nolan, OP
Adrian Dominican Sisters
Office of the General Council

Joan Mumaw, IHM – Vice President

On behalf of the Leadership Council

Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Monroe, MI

Corinne Weiss,

Servants of Jesus Leadership Team

Saginaw MI

Beatrice Haines, OLVM

President, Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters

Huntington, IN

Eileen C. Reid, RJM

Provincial Superior

Religious of Jesus and Mary

Washington DC

Sister Cecilia Dwyer, O.S.B.

Prioress

Benedictine Sisters of Virginia

Sr. Dorothy Maxwell, Councilor

Sisters of St. Dominic

Blauvelt, New York

Adrian Dover OP
Prioress

Dominican Sisters of Houston, Texas

Francine Schwarzenberger OP

Dominican Sisters of Peace

Denver, Colorado

Rose Mary Dowling, FSM

President

Franciscan Sisters of Mary

Margaret Byrne CSJP - Congregation Leader
Teresa Donohue CSJP - Assistant Congregation Leader

Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace

Sr. Carmelita Latiolais, S.E.C.

Sisters of the Eucharistic Covenant

Sheral Marshall, OSF

Provincial Councilor

Sisters of St Francis

The Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes

Sister Joann Sambs, CSA

General Superior

The Leadership Team of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Third Order of St. Francis

Sister Jane Blabolil, SSJ-TOSF

Sister Michelle Wronkowski, SSJ-TOSF

Sister Dorothy Pagosa, SSJ-TOSF

Sister Linda Szocik, SSJ-TOSF

Sr. Mary Genino (RSHM), Provincial

Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary

Western American Province.

Debra M. Sciano, SSND

Provincial Leader

Milwaukee Province, School Sisters of Notre Dame

Sister Liz Heese

School Sisters of St. Francis

US Province, Milwaukee, WI

Marlene Weisenbeck, FSPA, President

Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration

La Crosse, WI

Sharon Simon, OP

President

Racine Dominicans

Maryann A. McMahon, O.P.

Vice President

Dominican Sisters of Racine, WI

Agnes Johnson, OP

Vice President

Racine Dominicans

Pat Mulcahey, OP

Prioress of Sinsinawa Dominicans

Theresa Sandok, OSM

Servants of Mary (Servite Sisters)

Ladysmith, Wisconsin

Sister Maureen McCarthy
School Sisters of St. Francis
U.S. Provincial Team
Milwaukee, WI

Dolores Maguire

Sisters of the Holy Faith

Northern California LCWR Region XIV

Patricia Anne Cloherty, PBVM

Leadership Team, Sisters of the Presentation, San Francisco

Pam Chiesa, PBVM

President

Sisters of the Presentation, San Francisco

Gloria Inés Loya

Leadership Team

Sisters of the Presentation, San Francisco

Gloria Marie Jones, OP

Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose

Congregational Prioress and Council

Mary Litell

Provincial Councilor

Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity St. Francis Province

Sr Claire Graham SSS

General Director

Sisters of Social Service

Encino CA

Sr. Gladys Guenther SHF

Sisters of the Holy Family

Congregational President

Fremont, CA

Sister Patricia Rayburn, OSF,

Provincial Minister, Sisters of St. Francis,

Redwood City, CA

Sisters of St. Louis, California Region

Marianites of Holy Cross

Sr. Suellen Tennyson, MSC
Congregational Leader

New Orleans, LA

Sister Clare of Assisi Pierre, SSF

Sisters of the Holy Family

New Orleans, LA

Congregation of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Sister Elizabeth Fitzpatrick, O.Carm.

Sister Andree Bindewald, O.Carm.

Lacombe, Louisiana

Sister Marla Monahan, SND
Provincial
Sisters of Notre Dame
(St. Claire Regional Medical Center in Morehead, KY

and St. Charles Care Center in Covington, KY)

Sr. Mary Elizabeth Schweiger, OSB

Subprioress

Mount St. Scholastica

Atchison, KS

Janice Cebula, OSF

President

Sisters of St. Francis, Clinton, Iowa

Mary Rehmann, CHM

President

Congregation of the Humility of Mary

Davenport, IA

CATHOLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION SUPPORT LETTER

March 11, 2010

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), the national leadership organization of more than 2,000 Catholic health care sponsors, systems, hospitals, long-term care facilities, and related organizations, **I am writing to urge you to move quickly to enact health reform by passing the Senate-approved legislation in conjunction with a second “corrections” bill providing for necessary legislative fixes that will improve the overall package.**

As a longtime advocate of health reform, CHA and its members are committed to creating a health care system that ensures everyone will get the health care they need, when they need it. The 47 million individuals without insurance, the 16 million individuals who are underinsured, and the insured who have trouble affording their current coverage are all in desperate need of improvements to our health care system. It has been clear for many years now that fundamental, comprehensive reform of the health care system is not merely a financial or political issue, but a moral imperative as well. We commend Congress for all your efforts over the past year on behalf of those failed by the current system, and urge you to bring those efforts to fruition as quickly as possible.

The Senate legislation goes a long way toward meeting the goals of reform, including expanding coverage to over 30 million of the uninsured through Medicaid expansion, tax credits and subsidies; providing much-needed reforms of the private insurance market; bending the cost curve of the health system by supporting delivery system reforms that improve quality of care, patient outcomes, and efficiency; and addressing federal spending levels by being fully paid for and reducing the deficit by \$100 billion over the next ten years.

CHA, however, believes the Senate legislation should be amended through a “corrections” bill to address the following issues:

- The corrections bill should increase tax credits for low-income individuals and families to ensure affordability of coverage, as outlined in the President’s recent legislative proposal;
- The bill should increase Medicaid primary care service reimbursement rates to Medicare levels to ensure access to services and providers;
- The bill should reduce the cuts to Medicaid disproportionate share hospital (DSH) payments to ensure hospitals will be able to continue to care for the most vulnerable;
- The bill should retain the Senate provisions applying the 340B drug discount program to inpatient drugs enabling hospitals that serve a large volume of low-income and uninsured patients to purchase inpatient drugs at a discounted rate; and
- The bill should ensure that the final, overall health reform package will provide no federal funding for abortion.

As you are undoubtedly aware, the next several weeks offer what is most probably the best opportunity to enact health reform during the current Congress, and make real and significant progress toward improving the lives and health security of millions of Americans. We hope that you will step up to the challenge before us to make reform a reality, and we pledge to support you and all those in favor of reform in this effort. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or any member of CHA’s advocacy staff.

Sincerely,

Sr. Carol Keehan, DC

President and CEO

PRO-LIFE LEADER SUPPORT LETTER

March 11, 2010

Dear Member of Congress:

As Christians committed to a consistent ethic of life, and deeply concerned with the health and well-being of all people, we want to see health care reform enacted. Our nation has a rare and historic opportunity to expand coverage to tens of millions of people, make coverage more affordable for all families, and crack down on many of the most harmful practices of the health insurance industry.

We are writing because of our concern about the lack of clear and accurate information regarding abortion provisions in the health care reform bill passed by the Senate on December 24, 2009.

Reforming our health care system is necessarily complex and the provisions related to abortion, or any other issue, require careful examination of the facts as they exist in the legislative language. We believe that the provisions below provide extensive evidence that longstanding restrictions on federal funding of abortion have been maintained. Furthermore, this bill provides new and important supports for vulnerable pregnant women.

Following is a comprehensive factual listing of all provisions related to abortion and positive supports for pregnant women in HR 3590, along with specific page references.

***Abortion Related Provisions included in the Senate Approved Health Care Reform Bill
“Patient***

Protection and Affordable Care Act” (HR 3590 EAS/PP)

- Prohibits the Secretary of HHS from requiring the coverage of any abortion services as part of the essential health benefits for any qualified health plan offered in a state insurance Exchange (pg. 2070);

- Allows the insurance company to decide whether or not to include coverage of abortion services, including the Hyde abortion exceptions, in a qualified health insurance plan offered in a state insurance Exchange (pg. 2070);

- Prohibits insurance companies from using federal funds, including federal tax credits and costsharing assistance, to pay for abortion services except for those services allowable under the Hyde amendment (pg. 2071);
- Requires an insurance company that chooses to offer a plan in a State Exchange with abortion coverage, beyond the Hyde abortion exceptions, to collect a separate second premium payment from each enrollee for the cost of the abortion coverage (pgs. 2071-2072 & 2074-2075);
- Requires the insurance company to deposit all separate payments into a separate account that consists solely of abortion premium payments and that it is used exclusively to pay for such services (pgs. 2072-2074);
- Requires the state health insurance commissioners to ensure that insurance companies comply with these requirements in accordance with guidance and accounting standards set by the Office of Management and Budget and the Government Accountability Office (pg. 2075);
- Requires insurance companies that offer general abortion coverage as part of a qualified health plan to provide a notice of coverage in the summary of benefits and coverage explanation (pg. 2076);

- Allows states to pass a law prohibiting the inclusion of abortion coverage in plans offered in a state health insurance Exchange (pg. 2069);
- Requires the director of the Office of Public Management to ensure that there is at least one private, multi-state qualified health plan offered in each state insurance Exchange that does not provide coverage of abortion services beyond the Hyde exceptions (pgs. 2087-2088);
- Prohibits insurance companies offering qualified health plans from discriminating against any individual health care provider or health care facility because of its unwillingness to provide, pay for, provide coverage of, or refer for abortions (pg. 2076);
- Prohibits the preemption of state laws regarding abortion (pg. 2077);
- Maintains current Federal laws relative to conscience protection; willingness or refusal to provide abortion; and discrimination on the basis of the willingness or refusal to provide, pay for, cover, or refer for abortion or to provide or participate in training to provide abortion (pg. 2077);

- Establishes and provides \$250 million for programs to support vulnerable pregnant women (pgs. 2170-2173); and
- Increases the adoption tax credit and makes it refundable so that lower income families can access the tax credit (pgs 2400-2407).

We are now at a critical moment in the history of our country. More than 30 million Americans may finally gain access to a health care system that is affordable -- providing families, children and seniors with fundamental care that is essential to human dignity. We respectfully ask that you make an informed decision about this legislation based on careful deliberation guided by facts.

Sincerely,

Morna Murray

President

Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good

Ron Sider

President

Evangelicals for Social Action

Rev. Jim Wallis

President and CEO

Sojourners

Stephen F. Schneck

Director, Institute for Policy Research & Catholic Studies

The Catholic University of America

Joel Hunter

Senior Pastor

Northland Church

Dr. David P. Gushee

Chair

New Evangelical Partnership for the Common Good

David O'Brien

Professor of Faith and Culture

University of Dayton

Francis Xavier Doyle

Former Associate General Secretary

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

Jean Stokan

Director

Institute Justice Team

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas

Lisa Cahill

Professor of Theology

Boston College

Bryan N. Massingale, S.T.D.

President, Catholic Theological Society of America

Associate Professor of Theology

Marquette University

David DeCosse

Director of Campus Ethics Programs

Markkula Center for Applied Ethics

Santa Clara University

Nicholas P. Cafardi

Dean Emeritus and Professor of Law

Duquesne University School of Law

Dennis M. Doyle

Religious Studies

University of Dayton

Terrence W. Tilley

Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J. Professor of Catholic Theology

Chair, Theology Department

Fordham University

Richard Gaillardetz

Murray/Bacik Professor of Catholic Studies

University of Toledo

Vincent J. Miller

Professor

Department of Religious Studies

University of Dayton

Alex Mikulich

Research Fellow

Jesuit Social Research Institute

Loyola University

Sandra A. Yocum, Ph.D.

Chair of Religious Studies

University of Dayton

Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Hale

Senior Pastor

Ray of Hope Christian Church, Decatur, GA

Dr. Barbara Williams Skinner

President

Skinner Leadership Institute

Cheryl Bridges Johns

Professor of Christian Formation & Discipleship

Pentecostal Theological Seminary

Brian McLaren

Author, Speaker and Founding Pastor

Cedar Ridge Community Church

Glen Stassen

Lewis B. Smedes Professor of Christian Ethics

Fuller Theological Seminary

Lisa Sharon Harper

Executive Director, NY Faith & Justice

Author, Evangelical Does Not Equal Republican...or Democrat